

# **NCRN Inventory and Monitoring Program Online Newsletter**

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## **(1) NPSpecies USE AND DATA CERTIFICATION TRAINING SCHEDULED**

## **(2) PLANT INVENTORIES SET TO BEGIN**

## **(3) MONITORING UPDATE - PROTOCOL DEVELOPMENT UNDERWAY**

## **(4) MEETING OF THE I & M NETWORKS, AUGUST 2003**

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### **1. NPSpecies use and data certification training scheduled**

The National Capital Region Network I & M Program has organized a two-day training session entitled "NPSpecies Quality Assurance Workshop." Mark Wotawa, the service-wide Biological Inventories Coordinator, will be the instructor for this training, to be held at the National Capital Region Training Center on August 25 and 26, 2003. The purpose of this training session is to provide an overview and hands-on exercises in the use of NPSpecies for park resource management staff, followed by a review and certification of park bird data currently in NPSpecies. The review and certification process will ensure quality data in NPSpecies and satisfy the programmatic goals of the Biological Inventories Program. Each park will need to designate someone knowledgeable about birds in the park to attend the review and certification training. If desired, multiple parks can designate the same person. Christina Wright, NCRN Data Manager, will be sending out a training announcement and registration form to each of the parks in the near future.

For more information about this training session, contact Christina Wright (202-342-14433 x230; [Christina\\_Wright@nps.gov](mailto:Christina_Wright@nps.gov)).

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### **2. Plant inventories set to begin**

The I & M Program is pleased to announce that an inventory of vascular plants will begin at Antietam, Monocacy, Prince William, and Wolf Trap this summer. The vascular plant inventory is the last of six inventories funded by the I & M Program to be initiated. The I & M Program has established a cooperative agreement with Dr. Ted Bradley of George Mason University to conduct the inventory at Prince William, and with Dr. Katia Engelhardt of the Appalachian Laboratory, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, to conduct inventories at Antietam, Monocacy, and Wolf Trap. We are pleased to be working with such a qualified group of scientists and look forward to their future reports.

For more information about biological inventories in the parks, contact John Sinclair (202-342-1443 x222; [John\\_Sinclair@nps.gov](mailto:John_Sinclair@nps.gov)).

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### **3. Monitoring update – protocol development underway**

After the Monitoring Workshop last summer, the I & M team was left with 51 proposed priority vital signs. The team determined initially that most of these vital signs could be monitored using roughly 14 different monitoring methods. After further review, the team determined that several of these vital signs were already being monitored in the region, and a few others were not considered feasible. This left the list of vital signs at 38.

In an effort to find the most efficient and practical way to monitor these remaining 38 vital signs, the I & M staff grouped them under seven broadly defined monitoring methods, including air and vegetation monitoring, wildlife, water, invertebrates, RTE sites, and remote sensing. So, for example, by setting up systematic vegetation plots throughout the parks, we can address 10 different vital signs. Remote sensing with aerial color infrared photography could provide data for 10 additional vital signs. Our challenge now is to further develop the protocols for each of these monitoring methods to get a better idea of how extensive surveys would need to be, including their costs, in order to properly address the vital signs. Once we have this more detailed information, we can take another swing at prioritizing and try to determine how we can get the most bang for our buck. RFPs to develop the monitoring protocols are currently being sent to interested parties.

For more information about the monitoring program or the development of the Network Monitoring Plan, contact Marcus Koenen (202-342-1443 x 216; [Marcus\\_Koenen@nps.gov](mailto:Marcus_Koenen@nps.gov)).

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#### **4. Meeting of the I & M networks, August 2003**

The National Capital Region Network is just one of 32 nationwide networks under the I & M Program. Each year, all of these networks come together for a meeting to exchange information, share successes and failures, and to discuss future direction for the program. This year, the NCRN is proud to be hosting the "Meeting of the Networks" at The National Conference Center in Lansdowne, VA. The meeting will be held from August 18-21, 2003. Of particular interest to those unfamiliar with the I & M Program will be the introductory sessions on the first day. These sessions are designed to provide a broad overview of the national program, from its inception to its current status and direction. Any persons new to the parks or unfamiliar with the national I & M Program are encouraged to attend these sessions.

For more information about the "Meeting of the Networks," contact Marcus Koenen (202-342-1443 x 216; [Marcus\\_Koenen@nps.gov](mailto:Marcus_Koenen@nps.gov)).

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This Newsletter is sent quarterly by the National Capital Region Network Inventory and Monitoring Program. The staff is based out of the NPS Center for Urban Ecology, 4598 MacArthur Blvd. NW, Washington DC 20007. If you would like to be added to or deleted from the mailing list, please contact Sybil Hood ([Sybil\\_Hood@nps.gov](mailto:Sybil_Hood@nps.gov); 202-342-1443 x 229).